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News Release

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Kaua'i clinics pause Johnson & Johnson vaccine, continue to offer Moderna and Pfizer appointments

LĪHU'E – The Kaua'i District Health Office confirmed that all Kaua'i vaccine administration sites have complied with the federal recommendation to pause administration of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine out of an abundance of caution.

Some vaccination providers scheduled to administer Johnson & Johnson vaccine in the coming days may offer Pfizer or Moderna vaccine instead.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are reviewing data involving six cases in which individuals who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine developed blood clots.

"These events were extremely rare. DOH is pausing use of the vaccine because the health and safety of our community is our primary concern," said Kaua'i District Health Officer, Dr. Janet Berreman.

"Out of nearly 7 million doses of vaccine administered, these serious blood clots occurred in six people—fewer than one in a million. In contrast, if you get the COVID-19 disease, it causes significant neurological and psychological effects in the six months following infection in one of three of those infected."

The blood clots, called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis, occurred in women ages 18 to 48. Symptoms occurred 6 to 13 days after vaccination.

There are no reports of anyone in Hawai'i developing blood clots after receiving a Johnson & Johnson vaccine. People who received a Johnson & Johnson vaccine within the past three weeks should contact their healthcare provider if they experience a severe headache, abdominal pain, leg pain, or shortness of breath.

For more information, please read the official statement issued jointly by the CDC and FDA:
<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s0413-JJ-vaccine.html>

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, which use different delivery technology than the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, are widely available on Kaua'i. Over 185 million doses of these vaccines have been safely administered in the United States. "We strongly encourage Kaua'i residents to proceed with being vaccinated with either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine," said Dr. Berreman. "Being vaccinated protects you and our community, and contributes to our economic recovery by keeping workers healthy and on the job."

All Kaua'i residents age 16 and older can make appointments now for the Pfizer vaccine, and residents 18 and older for the Moderna vaccine, by visiting www.kauai.gov/vaccine.

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